

# CLAY COUNTY

## Honorable George C. Simpson

Clay County Courthouse  
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Keith Jones  
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Richard Whatley  
Nell West  
Greg Varner  
Joanne Blair  
Zeola Echlos  
Donna McKay  
Benny Davis  
Roger Gaither  
Tammy Counts  
Amanda Upchurch

## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Fund local Family Resource Centers and Executive Director positions
2. Child abuse and neglect; Parenting involvement skills
3. Fund child care for low income working families. Access to childcare

# Issues

*Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.*

## **Health - Children's (0 - 19)**

physical and mental well-being in the county.

### **Reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases among teens in Clay County**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide career awareness/education and goal setting activities to promote values and attitudes regarding future education and vocation
- administer (by professionals) a sexual abstinence based program to all Clay County 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders
- provide and organize a process for the encouragement of pre-marriage counseling
- establish and support programs that promote educational and cultural awareness
- establish a family resource center where the foregoing classes and counseling etc. will be provided

## **Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.**

### **All children to live in a safe, stable and emotionally healthy family**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide ongoing parenting classes (with child-care) with referrals from schools, court system, mental health, and other professions
- provide all children from birth to 12 years access to family and childhood developmental classes, to coincide with the parenting classes being taught for targeted adults
- establish in county mentoring program
- refer mentees from local schools and probation services and divorce
- establish a family resource center where the foregoing classes and counseling etc. will be provided

## **Education - Children**

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

### **Does every child in Clay County, Alabama have access to a quality education that incorporates both academics and cultural awareness?**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide career awareness/education and goal setting activities to promote values and attitudes regarding future education and vocation
- establish some form of "trade training"
- establish and support programs which promote educational and cultural awareness
- establish an after school mentoring and tutoring program that prepares students in academic disciplines required for successful performance on the High school graduation exam and SAT
- in partnership with the Clay County Arts League, urge the schools to provide facilities and teen volunteers to facilitate and teen volunteers to facilitate the summer Arts Camp experience in the areas of art, drama, dance, music, pottery, etc.
- in partnership with city libraries, provide after-school reading programs
- establish a family resource center where the foregoing classes etc, will be provided

## Early Care and

### Education - Children

(0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

**Do all parents-to-be of children from birth to 12 years of age have access to prenatal and parent educational classes, with accommodations for bilingual families**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide ongoing parenting classes (with child-care) with referrals from schools, court system, mental health, and other professions
- provide all children from birth to 12 years access to family and childhood developmental classes, to coincide with the parenting classes being taught for targeted adults
- provide access to and develop a referral source for local pre-natal and newborn parent education classes
- establish a family resource center where the foregoing classes and counseling etc. will be provided
- care providers on successful "school readiness" models, curriculum, and outcome based planning for early care and education
- advocate for and partner in all efforts to secure funding for programs such as HIPPY, Parents as Teachers, Head Start, subsidized child care, Pre-K, and other programs serving children 0 to 5
- advocate for additional state and federal funding for programs that promote school readiness for children 0 to 5

## Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

**Is there sufficient job opportunity and workforce ability for a local rural populace to become economically secure, such security being essential to the health and safety of families and children**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide career awareness/education and goal setting activities to promote values and attitudes regarding future education and vocation
- establish some form of "trade training"
- establish and support programs that promote educational and cultural awareness
- establish a Family Resource center where the foregoing programs can be carried out
- employ an Executive Director of a family resource center who can devote full time and effort toward locating funds for such programs and seeing to their long-term viability

## Parent Involvement and Skills - Parents and

guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

**Will development of parental skills programs together with child coping skill programs contribute to the betterment of families and children, and how can families be motivated to take advantage of some**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- provide ongoing parenting classes (with child-care) with referrals from schools, court system, mental health, and other professions
- provide all children from birth to 12 years access to family and childhood developmental classes, to coincide with the parenting classes being taught for targeted adults
- seek business sponsorships to encourage employee awareness and involvement in a program for parental skill development

**Is a central family resource center essential to parent training and skill development**

Policy Council Action Steps:

- attempt to locate an able executive director who is willing to come to work, even without a definitive location, and who will be willing and able seek grant funding for the position, and ultimately for a resource center

## Policy Recommendation

1. Make funds available for more non-traditional academic programs.
2. Fund local Family Resource Centers and executive director positions.
3. Fund Child Care for low income working families.
4. Fund job training.
5. Fund obtaining an appropriate and available facility building to house the Family Resource Center and employment of executive director and staff.
6. Provide career awareness/education and goal setting activities to promote values and attitudes regarding future education and vocation.
7. Encourage industrial recruitment to rural areas. Expenditure of money on recruitment of such industries as the Honda Plant in Lincoln and the Hyundai plant, south of Montgomery provides jobs for people miles around, and is tremendously beneficial for rural areas which have been devastated by the decline in the textile industry.
8. Provide funding for educational and cultural programs and opportunities. An educated populace is more economically secure.
9. Provide all children from birth to 12 years access to family and childhood developmental classes, to coincide with the parenting classes being taught for targeted adults.
10. Provide initial funding for the creation of executive director positions and family resource centers. Without a location, which will not carry the stigma of a mental health center or a department of human resources, families are unlikely to seek the help necessary to their improvement.
11. Provide funding for the startup of programs for development of parenting skills and for publication of the availability of the same. Small rural communities lack the resources for funding such programs; however, once originally funded, same can and often do become self supporting through cooperation between the program, DHR, and the courts, etc. These startups should coincide with appropriate media publicity.

### Additional Clay County Children's Policy Council Members:

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